

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

March 27, 2002 LB 1062

that shows that at the end of the second year of medical school you take your first exam. From that point forward, you've got seven years to complete number two and number three, and for most students this works out well. As you can see, you can wait until your second or third year of residency. You can wait till you're finished with residency and you still have two years left before you bump into that deadline for completing exam number three. And some med school students will tell you, that given the pressures of residency, they do prefer to actually wait and take that final exam after residency is completed. And the overall theory here is that, if you can't get the sequence of examinations completed in that time frame, then you probably need to think about another career choice. Now the second time line reflects what exists now in this dual-degree program, that I had mentioned before, the M.D., Ph.D. The student completes the first two years of medical school and then takes the first exam. Then the student shifts to the Ph.D. segment of the program. Now I show here, a three-year block of time for that Ph.D. segment, but that's the minimum. And I'm told that it's not uncommon for that Ph.D. segment to stretch out over four or five years. You don't quite know the nature of the beast when you start off on a research project. But for purposes of the diagram there, I have a three-year segment of Ph.D. research. Then you switch back to the medical school track. You finish your final two years of med school and you take that exam number two. Next step, at the beginning of year eight, is residency. And again, you've got to complete six months of residency before you can take exam number three. I think you can see on the chart there, that by the time you're eligible to take exam number three, you're starting to bump up against that deadline, the deadline for completing the whole sequence of examinations. And if your Ph.D. project happen to run longer than three years, then you're really bumping up against that deadline. In fact, you might even be pushed beyond it by the time you even begin your residency. So you could be, in effect, disqualified from taking that third and final licensing exam that you need to take. That's the constraint that these dual-degree program students are facing right now. So the final time line that I've drawn is what the new sequence would be if we adopt the change that I propose here. Two years of med school, three years of Ph.D. research, another two years of med